

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LAGOS 08404 080711Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9358
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 8404

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, OAU, ET, SO
SUBJECT: OAU MEDIATION OF HORN CONFLICT

REF: LAGOS 4736, MOGADISCIO 1518, LAGOS 7466

1. BRONSON DEDE, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO MEA COMMISSIONER GARBA,
TOLD POLCOUNS ON JULY 5 THAT GARBA WAS SUCCESSFUL DURING HIS JULY
1-3 TRIP TO MOGADISCIO AND ADDIS ABABA IN GETTING THE TWO PARTIES
TO AGREE TO MEET AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL DURING THE FORTHCOMING
OAU CONSULTATIONS.

2. DEDE SAID THAT NEITHER SIDE HAD MOVED FROM ITS PREVIOUS
POSITION BUT A LAST ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO PREPARE AN AGENDA
FOR A FUTURE MEETING BETWEEN SIAD BARRE AND MENGISTU.

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PAGE 02 LAGOS 08404 080711Z

3. ACCORDING TO DEDE, SIAD BARRE AT FIRST INSISTED ON A
SUMMIT MEETING WITH MENGISTU IN KHARTOUM AT THE CONCLUSION OF
THE OAU SUMMIT CONSULTATIONS. THIS WAS NOT AGREEABLE TO THE
ETHIOPIANS; IN FACT, IT TOOK A GREAT DEAL OF PRESSURE BY GARBA
TO GET THE ETHIOPIANS TO AGREE TO MEET AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL.

4. WHEN ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY PROSPECT OF PROGRESS AT THE

FORTHCOMING MEETING, DEDE SHRUGGED AND NOTED THAT AT LEAST NIGERIA, AS CHAIRMAN OF THE GOOD OFFICES COMMITTEE AND THE ONLY MEMBER ATTEMPTING TO CARRY OUT ITS MANDATE, COULD SUBMIT A REPORT SHOWING THAT EVERY EFFORT HAD BEEN MADE.

5. MARTIN BOURKE, BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION POLITICAL OFFICER, INFORMS US THAT THEIR MISSION IN MOGADISCIO REPORTED THAT GARBA SPOKE STERNLY TO THE SOMALIS, TELLING THEM TO KEEP THEIR TROOPS WITHIN THEIR OWN BORDERS AND REFRAIN FROM VIOLATING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THEIR NEIGHBORS. THE BRITISH MISSION IN ADDIS LIKEWISE REPORTED THAT HE LECTURED THE ETHIOPIANS ON THE DANGERS OF ALLOWING THE CUBANS TO GET INVOLVED IN ERITREA.

6. SOME OF ABOVE WAS CORROBORATED BY GARBA IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR EASUM JULY 6. HE SAID HE HAD DISCOVERED IN ADDIS, TO HIS GREAT SURPRISE, THAT MENGISTU'S STUBBORNESS REGARDING SITTING DOWN WITH THE SOMALIS RELATED SOLELY TO A MEETING AT THE SUMMIT LEVEL. MENGISTU WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO A MINISTERIAL MEETING. GARBA WAS THEREFORE CONFIDENT HE COULD GET THE TWO MINISTERS TOGETHER WITH HIM AT KHARTOUM, AND HE EVEN THOUGHT THERE WAS REASONABLE CHANCE OF A SUBSEQUENT MEETING AT THE HEAD OF STATE LEVEL.

7. COMMENT: GARBA OSCILLATES BETWEEN EXUBERANT OPTIMISM AND FRUSTRATED GLOOM DEPENDING ON THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE LATEST CONVERSATION AT THE LATEST JET STOP. HE APPEARS TO CONDUCT HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LAGOS 08404 080711Z

PERIPATETIC DIPLOMACY WITH RELATIVELY LITTLE STAFFWORK OR SUPPORT FROM ADVISERS, DRAWING FOR WHATEVER EFFECTIVENESS HE HAS FROM HIS BOUNDLESS DRIVE AND EGO-CENTERED ENERGY AS WELL AS THE REASONABLY COMFORTABLE RELATIONSHIP HE HAS DEVELOPED WITH OBASANJO. HE DOES NOT BURDEN HIMSELF WITH DETAILS, AND HIS QUICK-MINDED PRAGMATISM AND CONCENTRATION ON OBTAINING TANGIBLE RESULTS FROM HIS INTERVENTIONS HAVE SOMETIMES PRODUCED AT LEAST THE APPEARANCE OF SUCCESS. I THOUGHT HE WAS PARTICULARLY USEFUL AT THE VANCE/OWEN TALKS WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IN DAR ES SALAAM. HE DELIVERED NUJOMA AT LEAST IN BODY AND HE WAS EFFECTIVE IN THOSE INITIAL SKIRMISHES WHEN THE PF SEEMED TO HAVE GONE BACK BEYOND MALTA. THERE IS OFTEN MORE ACTIVITY THAN SUBSTANCE IN GARBA'S PERFORMANCE. HIS IMPATIENCE WITH THE COMPLICATIONS OF SUCH FACTORS AS ETHNICITY, IDEOLOGY, ECONOMIC AND HISTORY IMPOSES AN INESCAPABLE SUPERFICIALITY ON WHAT OTHERWISE MIGHT BE A RATHER REMARKABLE RECORD OF AFRICAN STATESMANSHIP. HIS STAFF MIGHT AT LEAST PARTIALLY MAKE UP FOR THESE DEFICIENCIES WERE HE TO USE THEM BETTER. THEY RANK HIGH ON THE AFRICAN SCALE IN TERMS OF TRAINING, SOPHISTICATION AND EXPERIENCE. THEIR ORGANIZATION AND TEAMWORK, HOWEVER, IS ABOMINABLE, AND NEARLY ALL OF THEM ARE NEWLY ARRIVED OR ABOUT TO BE REASSIGNED ANYWAY. GARBA MAY SUCCEED IN INSPIRING OR AT LEAST EXCITING THEM

BUT WE DOUBT HE CAN BUILD AN EFFECTIVE SUPPORTING STAFF IN THE
REMAINING 15 WCQNTHS OF MILITARY RULE.
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